



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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SECNAVINST 1560.4
ASN (M&RA)

29 July 1998

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 1560.4

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY VOLUNTARY EDUCATION (VOLED) PROGRAM

Ref: (a) DOD Directive 1322.8 of 6 Jan 97 (NOTAL)
(b) DOD Instruction 1322.25 of 5 Feb 97 (NOTAL)
(c) Title 10, United States Code 2007
(d) DON Comprehensive Assessment (NOTAL)
(e) Section 1073 of Public Law 104-106, "National Defense Authorization Act, 1996," 10 Feb 96
(f) Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support of 19 Jul 82 (NOTAL)

Encl: (1) Definitions

1. Purpose. To establish Department of Navy (DON) VOLED policy and assign responsibility for Navy and Marine Corps VOLED programs in accordance with references (a) through (f).

2. Scope. VOLED enables active duty Sailors and Marines to further their education by completing a high school diploma or its equivalency (GED), upgrading basic academic skills, and achieving a technical certificate or college degree.

3. Definitions. Special terms used in this instruction are defined in enclosure (1).

4. Applicability. This instruction applies to the active duty component of the Navy and Marine Corps. On a space available, self-funded basis, adult family members, retired members, their family members, and civilian employees of the Department of Defense (DoD) may take advantage of educational opportunities provided under the VOLED program. Active duty members of other United States armed services who are assigned to Navy or Marine Corps commands may also participate in DON VOLED programs.

5. Background. VOLED programs in the Navy and Marine Corps were established in the early 1970s with the advent of the all-volunteer force, to help recruit and retain quality personnel. Today, investment in VOLED is essential for the department's Quality of Life program.

6. Mission. By helping Sailors and Marines continue their education, the DON will: (1) enhance the career potential of

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members; (2) retain quality personnel; (3) strengthen job performance; and (4) facilitate further learning.

7. Policy. In support of these purposes:

a. Navy and Marine Corps shall support educational programs in which Sailors and Marines may participate voluntarily by ensuring members have access to educational services regardless of mission or duty assignment. Wherever appropriate, distance learning technologies are to be used to support this policy.

b. In accordance with reference (b), Navy and Marine Corps shall only support educational institutions that are accredited by an agency recognized by the Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or a successor organization.

c. The Navy and Marine Corps will adhere to the uniform Tuition Assistance policy established by the Department of Defense (DoD).

d. Staffing at education offices should be adequate to support the number of active duty personnel on site. Per reference (d), the requirement is one educational staff member for every 2000 active duty personnel, with the condition that the minimum standard for an education center is two staff (including one professional) at each center.

e. Navy and Marine Corps shall ensure that guidance, counseling, and testing services are provided by qualified personnel.

f. Navy and Marine Corps shall ensure members are given an opportunity to upgrade their basic/academic skills regardless of mission or duty assignment. In accordance with reference (e), adult family members are eligible to participate in academic skills programs overseas.

g. Sailors and Marines shall be encouraged to obtain a Servicemembers Opportunity College Navy (SOCNAV) or Servicemembers Opportunity College Marine Corps (SOCMAR) student agreement in order to achieve a college degree.

h. The Navy and Marine Corps shall participate in the Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER) and provide responses to specific MIVER reports to the Secretary of the Navy's office (Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)).

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i. The Secretary of the Navy shall serve as Executive Agent for the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), in accordance with reference (a).

8. Responsibilities and Procedures

a. The Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN(MRA)) shall be the responsible Secretariat office for:

- (1) developing DoN policy for voluntary education;
- (2) monitoring compliance with DoD guidance on VOLED programs;
- (3) monitoring the implementation of the VOLED Master Plans for the Navy and Marine Corps;
- (4) determining the degree to which the Navy and Marine Corps have responded positively to the recommendations of the MIVER third party review teams.

b. The Chief of Naval Operations (N1) and the Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) shall:

(1) Serve as resource sponsor for VOLED by ensuring that sufficient fiscal, facilities, and staffing support is provided to carry out the requirements of this instruction, including, but not necessarily limited to, a worldwide network of education centers, trained staff to provide educational counseling, adequate facilities, and funding for tuition assistance, the Program for Afloat College Education (PACE), the Marine Corps Satellite Education Network (MCSEN), academic skills programs, and DANTES.

(2) Perform its delegated duties as specified in reference (f) concerning DANTES.

c. Chief of Naval Personnel and Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) shall:

(1) Issue VOLED policy guidance consistent with references (a) and (b).

(2) Ensure that the uniform tuition assistance policy is supported.

(3) Maintain equity of educational access for all ships, sea-going Unit Identification Codes, embarked Marines,

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detachments and remote sites. Access includes both use of traditional and distance learning delivery systems including the INTERNET.

(4) Ensure installation commanding officers, ship commanding officers, unit commanders, and DON leadership are well informed about voluntary education opportunities.

(5) Review MIVER reports in order to formally request appropriate offices to take action in response to the MIVER's recommendations. Final responses are to be submitted to the Office of the Secretary of the Navy (ASN(MRA)).

(6) Periodically request studies to document the impact of VOLED programs on personnel and commands.

(7) Ensure that educational needs assessments are carried out periodically at the installation level to determine the educational requirements for DON personnel.

(8) Maintain liaison with Federal, State and national organizations in support of military voluntary education.

(9) Explore options for staffing education centers that maximize best business practices.

(10) Identify a Navy and a Marine Corps representative to serve on the Interservice Voluntary Education Working Group.

(11) Draft and periodically update a Voluntary Education Master Plan.

(12) Continuously explore distance learning systems to enhance educational access.



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Distribution:

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DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this instruction, the following definitions apply:

Academic Skills. Programs of study that help Sailors and Marines master basic academic skills (this includes language arts, reading, writing, mathematics through algebra, basic science, and workplace skills).

Distance Education. The delivery of education through electronically mediated means, including satellite, video teleconferencing, computer interactive video, the INTERNET, and any other means in which an instructor is not physically present. This definition also includes correspondence and independent study courses.

Education Office/Center. The voluntary education office on base.

Electronic Delivery. An educational delivery system facilitated by electronic means.

Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER). A third party review funded by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and conducted by a team of professionals who assess: (1) the quality of education offered by the educational providers; (2) the quality of services rendered by the education center; (3) the sufficiency of support by the installation and (4) the sufficiency of support by the chain of command.

Off-duty time. Time not scheduled to perform official duties. Service members participating in VOLED programs are expected to use off-duty time or off-watch time to complete degree programs. (Academic skills may be pursued during duty hours).

Education Specialists. Refers to the civilian personnel who staff the Navy and Marine Corps education offices. Members include:

(1) A Senior Education Specialist who manages the program on site.

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(2) Counselors who provide educational guidance.

(3) Education Technicians who assist in a variety of supporting roles.

Servicemembers Opportunity College Navy/Servicemembers Opportunity College Marine Corps (SOCNAV/SOCMAR). A consortium of accredited colleges that offer degree programs in a variety of fields. The colleges incorporate military training and experience for college credit, automatically accept transfer credit from other SOC colleges, and require minimum residency to complete a degree.

Tuition Assistance. Funds provided by the Navy and Marine Corps to pay part of the cost of tuition for courses taken during off-duty time.

Voluntary Education. Worldwide continuing education programs in which Sailors and Marines elect to participate during their off-duty time. The primary purpose is to earn a college degree. Voluntary Education programs also encompass Academic Skills which may be pursued either on or off-duty.

Enclosure (1)